WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTRARRED QUESTIONS

Shortage of Flight Inspectors

904. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Flight Inspection Directorate of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation which is responsible for observing that pilots observe flight safety, is short of inspectors;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is no full time flight inspector for 31 airbus A-320 for the last one year; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (c) There are 15 sanctioned posts of Flight Inspectors in the Office of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. A total of 9 posts of Flight Inspectors, including one for A-320 aircraft, have been filled up at present. A proposal for filling up the remaining 6 posts has already been sent to Union Public Service Commission.

Induction of New Aircrafts in I.A.

905. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Airlines is purchasing new Aircrafts to revamp the operation;

(b) if so, the number of aircrafts being brought in;

(c) what is the total cost of these aircrafts;

(d) in what manner the Airlines is arranging for the funds; and

(e) by when these aircrafts will be inducted into the flights?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (e) Indian Airlines is considering induction of new aircraft to replace the fleet of Airbus A300 (including leased aircraft) and Boeing 737 aircraft and also to augment capacity to cater to the annual growth of around 5%. The technical evaluation of the aircraft proposed for induction has since been completed. It is estimated that induction of 38 aircraft during five years period will be required. The project cost for induction of

these aircraft would be approximately Rs. 9000 crores phased over a five year period.

Government of India has decided in principle to release Rs. 325 crores as equity infusion in Indian Airlines in the form of margin money for acquisition of new aircraft. The remaining cost is to be met by the Company through internal resources and external commercial borrowings.

Indian Airlines has now been advised to formulate a specific proposal for acquisition of these aircraft for Government's approval. No time frame can, however, be indicated at this stage for induction of these aircraft in the fleet of Indian Airlines.

New legislation for airport security

906. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that airport security in the country has gone overboard in the wake of recent spurt in the terrorist activities throughout the world;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to make aviation security rules more stringent to ensure greater safety in the journeys;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a new law is under consideration for arming the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security with greater powers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when new legislation is likely to be put in place?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Security arrangements at airports are reviewed according to threat perception. After the recent terrorist attacks in other countries, the following measures have been taken, *inter alia*, to further strengthen security at the airports in order to prevent hijackings and other unlawful interference with civil aviation operations:—

(i) Deployment of Sky Marshals on all routes of scheduled domestic airlines on random basis;